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FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7063

INFO RUEHJA/ISLAMIC CONFERENCE COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RUEHGG/UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RUEHUNV/USMISSION UNVIE VIENNA PRIORITY 0131

RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 0738

RUEHZS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS

RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 1567

RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 1116

RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON 2014

RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC

RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L JAKARTA 003166

SIPDIS

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DEPT FOR EAP, EAP/MTS, NEA, NEA/IR, NEA/IPA
NSC FOR EPHU

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/14/2017

TAGS: PREL PGOV MNUC ID IR XF

SUBJECT: MIDDLE EAST -- SPECIAL ENVOY REVIEWS GOI'S
ENGAGEMENT ON IRAN, PEACE PROCESS

REF: A. JAKARTA 2968

¶B. JAKARTA 2475

Classified By: DCM John Heffern, reasons 1.4 (b,d).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: On November 13 Indonesian Special Envoy for Middle East issues Alwi Shihab told the DCM that Iran was increasingly confident that it could proceed with its nuclear program without serious international action. He also said Indonesia continued to look for ways to support Palestinian President Abbas and his government. In Septel, Mission will request information regarding participation in the Annapolis conference by countries outside of the immediate region, which could be shared with Shihab and other Indonesian interlocutors. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (C) A CONFIDENT IRAN: Alwi Shihab, a former foreign minister who remains President Yudhoyono's confidant and Special Envoy on the Middle East, told the DCM on November 13 that he recently visited Iran in preparation for VP Kalla's planned trip there. (Note: VP Kalla planned to visit Iran, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates in late October but canceled the whole trip due to illness.)

¶3. (C) Although the visit had focused on Indonesia-Iran economic cooperation, particularly an Indonesian company's investment in an Iranian fertilizer factory, Shihab had also raised the nuclear issue with Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister. Tehran was increasingly confident that its cooperation with the IAEA would deflect pressure for any stronger international action against its nuclear program. The Iranians believed that Russia and China would support them in the UNSC, Shihab said. During a September visit to Jakarta (ref B), Russian President Putin had told SBY he was skeptical of U.S. claims that Iran's nuclear program aimed to develop nuclear weapons, according to Shihab.

¶4. (C) The DCM responded that UNSC resolutions clearly required Iran to halt all reprocessing activities. The P-5 and other UNSC members needed to remind Iran of its obligations in this regard. Shihab responded that Indonesia had delivered this message but had found Iran confident that it would not face any serious penalty for continuing its nuclear program.

¶ 15. (C) PEACE PROCESS: Shihab also noted that he would soon visit London, perhaps in mid-December, to discuss ways to help Palestinian President Abbas and his government. According to Shihab, a group of British notables led by Lord Jacobs, a Liberal-Democratic member of the House of Lords, had approached Shihab as part of his effort to support the Palestinian Authority without triggering the suspicion that would accompany overt European assistance. Shihab pointed out that although he consulted frequently with the Indonesian government on Middle East Issues, this latter initiative was not an official GOI mission. Still, he added, Indonesia was seeking ways in which it could support the peace process.

¶ 16. (C) Regarding President Abbas' statement in Jakarta that Indonesia was invited to participate in the upcoming Annapolis conference (ref A), Shihab noted that Abbas was particularly keen to enlist the support of non-Arab Muslim-majority countries and had also asked Turkey and Malaysia to participate. The GOI would be positive about possible Indonesian participation, according to Shihab.

¶ 17. (C) Given his regular contact with President Yudhoyono on Middle East issues, Alwi Shihab could be helpful in influencing Yudhoyono's thinking on the Peace Process. In Septel, Mission will request information regarding participation in the Annapolis conference by countries outside of the immediate region, which could be shared with Shihab and other Indonesian interlocutors.

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